

# Teacher's Pet

BY ARTHUR SOMERS ROCHE

A Story of the Age of Chivalry.

"SHOULDER ARMS! 'Ten-shun! Forward, march! Halt! Fix bayonets!" For a moment the leader of the gallant company stood in thoughtful silence. Hopelessly outnumbered, with certain destruction awaiting his forces should he lead them into the dreadful ambush, there was no thought of faltering in the multitude of his mental processes. But a man who is saying farewell to life may be pardoned if he snatches one moment from death to think upon his loved ones at home. Thank Heaven that he had had a furlough only a month ago! The knowledge that they were shipped him as a hero nerved him now. Then, too, there were his general's words when he had sent the young officer on this furlough home:

"Capt. Dory, the United States of America will always remember that you volunteered like a hero to save this Army. The rebels are hidden in a ravine. While they are killing you, we'll sneak up behind them and will win the battle. They won't be expecting us. And I give you my personal word, Capt. Dory, that you will have the biggest funeral any Union man has ever had."

We can forgive him that he brushed away a tear as he thought of how those sacred Union ranks burst into cheer as he strode away at the head of his little band of devoted followers. We can forgive him the swagger of his shoulders as he turned toward the waiting women and gave the order to charge. In his baggy Zouave breeches, with his hat pulled down over his eyes and his sword aloft he was, he felt, an inspiring figure, in his own personality representing the great ideal of freedom that had founded this mighty nation. To the group of girls who came around the corner he was just a boy.

"Oh, look at the soldier!" said one of them. She shrank close to her companions and her voice was raised in a tremor of fear. "He's all bloated," she cried. "I bet he's killed a million Rebels already this afternoon."

She left the sheltering embrace of her giggling companions and walked to the curbstone. She stretched out her arms appealingly.

"Shoot if you must this old gray head, but spare your country's flag," she said.

The fictitious gore with which she had smeared him, could have made the young warrior's cheeks no redder than they were now. His sword arm dropped to his side and his shoulders seemed to shrink together.

"Aw, you think you're smart, Eloise Dennison." Careless that she might ruin her stockings, the young girl now knelt upon the sidewalk. She stretched her arms wider and tossed her head back. "Have pity on a lone woman," she cried.

Twelve is a sensitive age. Roderick Dory could have endured mere insults and jibes from the black-haired beauty who taunted him, and would have been able to think up retorts that soon would have reduced her to tears and sent her away from the field of battle in shameful defeat. But this was a subtle form of insult new to his experience, and he found himself unable to cope with it. "I wish you was my sister," was all he could say.

The voice of Eloise became soft and coaxing. "I wish you was my little baby brother," she said. "I'd get you some nice doll soldiers and I'd dress you up—oh, so pretty that all the girls would want to kiss you."

"I'd like to see 'em try," growled Roderick.

Eloise, still kneeling, turned her lissom body at the waist. In tones that were now thrillingly deep she spoke to her companions. "He wants us to kiss him," she said. "Let's!"

Roderick looked over his shoulder. The imaginary company which he had been about to lead to slaughter no longer existed. He was just a self-conscious little boy, who had been reading of the landing of troops in Cuba, and who knew that he really was too old to dress up as a soldier. Twelve is on the border line of manhood. He had thought that this alleyway behind his house was safe from the desecrating observation of such fiendish persons as Eloise Dennison. Had he been able to foresee her coming he would never have dressed himself up in the Zouave uniform which a doting aunt had sent him on his recent birthday. Tempted by its romantic possibilities, he had donned it, and exposed himself to the humiliation which now he endured. "I just wish you was a boy," he cried.

Eloise's eyebrows lifted. "Why, Roddy dear, if I was a boy I wouldn't play with babies."

That was all; smiling, she walked on, and the other teachers followed. They were not so quick as Miss Tennant, but they followed her more perceptive lead. It was a little thing that she had done, yet it had restored manhood to Roddy and had made Eloise a little girl. The boy stared after her with adoration in his eyes. Then he turned to Eloise. "Move on, you kids," he said gruffly. "Can't you see I'm busy?"

Mildred Tennant's casual manner had been impressive. She had not seemed to note that Eloise was making fun of Roddy. Eloise somehow felt that she was the absurd one, not Roddy. The girls "moved on."

He waited until the girls were out of sight. He even went half-heartedly through the pretense of leading a charge against the hidden rebels in the mythical ravine. But the fire had gone from his play. He knew that he was too old for this sort of thing. Only an extreme pride enabled him to continue even for a moment. A boy must save his face, even to himself. In such ways we save our souls.

When he reached the gate that led into his own back yard, he turned and ran swiftly into the house. On the landing, one flight up, he encountered his mother.

"Well, how many of the enemy did my little hero kill today?" she asked. She was just the finest mother in all the world, but there were times when he felt that he and she were spiritually as far apart as the poles. This was one of the times. For the inspiring figure, in his own personality representing the great ideal of freedom that had founded this mighty nation, he would have been slightly contemptuous, he would have endured such an attitude more equably than her present one. Such is the psychology of boyhood. He brushed by her without answer. He knew that if he spoke he would incur the embargo which he had placed upon public tears. Yet once in his own room he gave himself unreservedly to the sobs of shame.

He stripped the offending uniform from his body and threw himself upon his bed. Years later he would remember this scene and smile with pitying understanding. For in those later years he would come to understand that no man ever ceases to play soldier. He would know that in the mind of every adult is a picture of himself, or herself, vastly different from the image which presents itself to the world. For there is no failure so complete but that he imagines a quick turn of circumstances which will make him a world figure.

RODDY, lying upon the bed, slowly ceased his sobbing. He had had a miraculous escape from gross and public humiliation. An angel had come down from Heaven itself and with certain magic words routed his foes. For certainly Miss Mildred Tennant was nothing less than an angel. Up to now he had looked at her with that healthy feeling of normal pity with which every normal boy looks at the guardians of the school-room.

He and she were opponents—not from choice, but through circumstance. Had any one an hour ago told Roddy Dory that he had within him those elements which made up a teacher's pet he would have resented the statement with all possible vigor of mind and body. Yet now, as he lay upon his bed, he gave himself over entirely to degradation.

Funny that it had never occurred to him before that Miss Tennant was very beautiful. He was at the age when only grotesque ugliness attracts his attention. Persons who were not freaks impressed themselves upon his imagination not at all. Of course, he had always known dimly that Eloise was extremely pretty. But his regard for her, of which he was hardly conscious, was based more upon her masculine qualities than upon her femininity. Eloise, until the last year or so, had been able to meet Roddy himself upon almost equal terms.

But more and more in the last year or so Eloise had withdrawn from companionship with Roddy. Instead of trying to play base ball, she had improved her skill at hopscotch and jackstones. Furthermore, she had become conscious of her ruffles and ribbons—had, indeed, a way of walking and talking and generally posing that rather sickened Roddy. After several years of degrading himself with the belief that Eloise was as good as any boy, he had come to recognition of the fact that Eloise was, after all, merely a girl. And his interest in her had waned from the moment of that recognition.

He would have been indignant had any one told him that Eloise's approval or contempt were important to him, and he would have been honestly indignant. Had some wise elder informed him that half of his suddenly conceived admiration for Miss Tennant was due to the fact that she had rehabilitated him in the eyes of Eloise he would have sneered. For 10 minutes after he had discovered her beautiful and gracious and altogether charming Miss Tennant was as immersed in the sea of love that he had completely forgotten the method of his precipitation therein.

That love could ever touch so hardy a person as himself had never entered his thoughts. Now, suddenly, he knew that there existed a Roderick Dory with whom he had held no previous acquaintance. Burning blushes suffused his cheeks as he contemplated this alien who was himself. And then the blushes left him, while a certain rapture owned him. The most glorious woman in the world had shown a marked preference for him. Had she not praised highly his patriotic play? There probably was no other boy of his acquaintance who could boast of such a mark of favor. Not that he wanted to boast—as a matter of fact, he must keep his secret closely to himself.

Like every other male of the species, he believed in his ability to hide the fact of his devotion to one of the other sex. Thus, next morning, he swaggered with a great assumption of carelessness up to Miss Tennant's desk.

"Had an extra apple today; dunno how it got in my lunch box; Nora musta put it there by mistake; she oughta know 'cause she's got apples; you might as well have it as any one else."

He placed the apple on her desk and walked off, still swaggering. He thought this swagger and the gruff speech would deceive. He was oblivious of the glances and whispered comments of the other pupils. Love is not merely blind, it is deaf. Deafness is relative. A boy in love may be deaf to whispers; he cannot be deaf to shrieks that split the atmosphere. At recess time Roddy emerged from the schoolhouse to find awaiting him a group of children. In the van were Eloise and his sister, Angela.

Eloise had pulled her scant skirts about her in imitation of the lady of that period. Before her, in an attitude that proved that Eloise was not the only potential emotional actress of the neighborhood, stood Angela. "Miss Tennant, I do-a-h you-a-h," shrieked Angela.

Eloise extended a kindly hand and patted the smaller girl upon the head. "I do-a-h you-a-h, Roddy darling," said Eloise. "Tomorrow you may bring a bunch of grapes."

It was the supreme height of juvenile wit which Angela and Eloise had attained. Shrieks of delight, of joy too poignant almost to be borne, greeted their burlesque.

As one turned to stone, Roddy stood at the schoolhouse steps and stared at them. What an utter fool he had been to think that he could keep from the keen eyes of Eloise the secret of his shame! If he could only leap upon these two feminine fiends and strangle them. . . . Out of the shrieks that came from the throats of 80 children he suddenly was able to distinguish one. "Roddy Dory is a teacher's pet, teacher's pet, teacher's pet!"

It was Jimmy Higgins who chanted the infamous accusation. He was 14 years old and hulkingly overgrown. His voice had "changed" in the last few months, and his bass qualities drowned all other voices. The children turned delightedly to him; they took up the chant and cried it in, it seemed to Roddy, every possible note of the scale.

Desperate means require desperate remedies. Jimmy Higgins was the undisputed bully of the school. Only a few weeks ago, in a moment of peevishness, he had slapped Roddy's face until the younger lad's ears rang. Meekly he had taken a thrashing, and it had never entered into his head to defend himself against such hopelessly overwhelming odds.

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"I CAN LICK ANY BOY IN THIS SCHOOL THAT CALLS ME A TEACHER'S PET," RODDY ANNOUNCED.

But now he knew, with an embryonic flash of that genius which would later in life make him a personage of consequence, that, unless he gave his fellows something more thrilling to talk about, the hateful cry of "teacher's pet" would resound in his ears for months to come. As in a later day he would control a hostile audience, so now he controlled this one. He held up his hand and the boys and girls were silent.

"I can lick any boy in this school that calls me a teacher's pet," he announced. Eighty pairs of eyes widened; then, as though set upon one neck, they turned and stared at Jimmy Higgins. That youth responded to the challenge. "Does that mean me?" he asked.

For answer Roddy walked down the steps and advanced upon the school bully. He wasted no precious breath in words; he struck with all his might. It was Miss Tennant herself, drawn to the scene by the shrieks of four score children, who separated the gladiators. Jimmy Higgins was entirely too big for Roddy. But he was winning the sort of victory which is so costly that one does not care to achieve several of them. For while Roddy's left eye was purple and puffed, and his lips were cut, Jimmy's nose was bleeding, and it was swollen most alarmingly. Also the bigger boy's right cheek was marked. He would never invite Roddy Dory to battle again. There is no fun or profit in whipping a boy who does not know when he is whipped.

ACHING, bruised and bleeding, Roddy Dory was happy. He knew that Jimmy Higgins would not call him a teacher's pet again, and that no other boy would utter words that the school bully refused to speak. As for the girls—he didn't care about them. He had proved his manhood to the boys and that was enough.

From the weeping Eloise, who had summoned her to the scene of battle, Miss Tennant had learned the cause of the fight. Jimmy Higgins could be left to his own teacher to be dealt with; Miss Tennant had no control over him. But she kept Roddy Dory after school. "I'm not going to punish you, Roddy," she told him. "In fact, I think that you were very brave to fight a boy so much bigger than yourself."

The boy beamed upon her. He had made no mistake when he had given his love to this glorious woman who understood. "Aw, he ain't anything wonderful," he said boastfully. "I guess while he was gettin' a meal I was takin' a mouthful 'ere and there." Miss Tennant hid the mirth that such bragging aroused in her. "But I don't want you to fight with him any more," she said.

"If he says anything about my bringing apples to you I'll fight him every day," declared Roddy. Miss Tennant stared at him. Then said:

"French and Belgian riflemen lost points this summer by their excitability. They were good in practice, but appeared to be nervous in championship matches."

"Once this excitability caused unexpected results. Two riflemen, a Belgian and a Frenchman, were arguing. The Belgian had leaned his rifle, its trigger set, against the wall, but a wave of the arm knocked it down, causing it to send a bullet into three toes of Lieut. Sidney R. Hines of the United States team, who was standing close by."

"The Belgian saw what had happened before the American did. His face paled. He backed away for about 20 feet. Then he broke into a run, leaving his gun where it had fallen."

"Lieut. Hines had felt no pain yet, but realized what had occurred when he noticed holes in his shoe. When he applied to a French physician for treatment the physician also proved easily alarmed. He ordered Hines to bed for a week, but the lieutenant was back on the range two days after the incident."

"Swiss and Scandinavian marksmen are those who may threaten future American victories. They have none of the nervousness of southern Europeans, but at present seem handicapped by lack of equipment and practice."

"I bet he'll be a general if the war lasts long enough," said Roddy. "I bet he will, too," said the teacher. "And in my next letter I'm going to tell him all about you."

Roddy Dory walked home on air. His mother, who had heard the tale of his battle from the lips of Angela, was too wise to rebuke him, although her heart ached at sight of his battered countenance. And at the table that night his father had great difficulty in concealing his warm admiration for his son.

"Fighting is very wrong," said Mr. Dory. "I'm dead against it, Roddy. I understand that this Higgins boy is a lot bigger than you."

"He's 14, and two inches taller," said Roddy.

"And I understand that you were still going strong when the teacher stopped you," said Mr. Dory.

Mrs. Dory frowned at her husband. "Fighting isn't nice," she said. Her rebuke was addressed to her husband and that gentleman colored accordingly. He changed the subject hastily.

"Well, we licked the Spaniards again yesterday," he said. "Evening paper says our boys killed 300 of them; we lost 50 men. Two officers among them: Capt. Blakeney and Lieut. Connors."

Roddy stiffened in his chair. "What was Lieut. Connors' first name?"

"Why, was he a friend of yours?" Roddy swallowed painfully. "Miss Tennant is going to marry a soldier named Lieut. Albert Connors."

Not competing as they wished. Their team captain and coach declined to prescribe food and sleeping hours, agreeing that "men who win places on an international match team should know how to keep themselves in condition."

Dinwiddie did most of his touring after the rifle matches, which were held in Rheims, ended. He spent a week in Paris—watching the finals of Olympic track and field events, viewing the French capital's celebrated buildings and boulevards and enjoying the wealth which superiority of American to French money gave him.

Paris is a city in which an American can get about easily. Maps of the city are posted in all subway stations. And taxi fares are so low that our party used them almost always. The taxi meter would register the equivalent of 4 cents in United States money at the start of the trip, and a long ride about Paris did not cost more than 40 cents. The Washington traveler said:

"Silk goods cost only half as much there as in the United States. A fine silk shirt can be bought for \$3. Other clothes there are about 20 per cent cheaper than they are in this country."

Mr. Dory's memory had been accurate. There it was in the evening paper, the name of Miss Tennant's fiancé under the caption, "Killed in Action."

As though some one of his own family had been killed, Roddy received this verification. He could not finish his supper. He rose from the table and went to his own room. There a little later his mother came to him.

"Don't feel bad, Roddy dear," she said. "There may be some mistake, after all." What a wise mother she was!

"How could there be a mistake?" asked Roddy.

"Mrs. Thurston stopped by here just now," replied his mother. "You know Miss Tennant boards with her. She told us that Miss Tennant told her that there were two Lieut. Connors in the regiment. One is named Alfred and the other Albert. She hasn't given up yet, although she's seen the evening papers, too."

"How's she going to find out?" asked Roddy.

"The morning papers will give more details," his mother told him. "She can only wait for them and hope for the best. You mustn't cry about it, Roddy."

Then, because she was as tactful as she was wise, she left him. Roddy knew that Miss Tennant must be broken-hearted; his boy's mind vaguely comprehended the tortures of uncertainty which she must be undergoing. He rose from the bed

and went downstairs. But, save for Angela, the house was deserted. It was Nora's night off, and his mother and father had gone out. He did not know where to find them, and he was rather glad of that, for he preferred to do himself what he had intended to suggest to his father.

It was 11 o'clock that night when a tired, footsore boy walked into the building that housed The Star newspaper. A stubborn office boy gave way, finally, when threatened with assault. The black eye and swollen lips of Roddy seemed to indicate that here was one who would back up words with deeds. He led Roddy to a man at a desk.

"I wanta know if you got any late news about which Lieut. Connors was killed in Cuba," said Roddy.

"Why? Relative of yours?" asked the man at the desk.

Roddy sat down. He had walked seven miles in three hours, and his eyes were heavy with sleep. Laboriously he explained why he asked the question. The man at the desk was kindly and showed a great interest. Roddy did not understand what he meant when he said to another man, "Peach of a human-interest story," nor did he understand why a flashlight picture of himself should be taken. He only knew that finally he was informed that dispatches had come through from Cuba stating that neither Lieut. Connors had been killed, but that Alfred had been slightly wounded. He was too sleepy

to understand why one of the men in the office got merely took him to the trolley car, but rode home with him. And long before he arrived home he was sound asleep. He was awakened in the morning, not by his mother or Nora, but by his father. Mr. Dory had a newspaper in his hand. It was folded back so that Roddy saw his own picture.

"Well, young man," said his father, "you gave us all a scare last night. Your mother was terribly frightened. But I'm not going to scold you. When the rest of us were too dumb to do anything to spare that poor girl a night of horror, you did the only thing. She went to sleep last night knowing that the man she loved was safe. Dog-gone if I don't think there'd be sense in some one out here getting one of those telephones put in. I know they cost a lot, but they come in mighty handy."

But Roddy didn't hear him. He was immersed in reading the highly colored account of the young boy who, having no carfare, had walked seven miles through the night, over unfamiliar roads, to save a young woman a night of uncertainty. It was not a very heroic thing that he had done, but the newspaper reporter had chosen to make it so. He forgot Miss Tennant completely.

What would Eloise have to say about that? What other boy of Eloise's acquaintance had ever had his picture in the paper? He guessed that ought to show her!

(Copyright, 1924.)

## D. C. Boy Wins Four Olympic Trophies

BY GENE THOMAS.

DAVID, the boy whose marksmanship made the scribes add another page to the Bible, has a twentieth century counterpart here in Washington. "Thou art but a youth," old King Saul, once the shepherd lad who wanted to use the giant Goliath as a target.

But David aimed at Goliath's forehead and scored a bull's-eye. "He's too small," the veteran coach criticized when a blue-eyed, blond-haired boy tried for a place on Central High School's rifle team, only two years ago. But the boy this summer broke a world rifle record while helping Uncle Sam to win the Olympic games.

This modern "David" of Washington is Marcus W. Dinwiddie, 17 years old, the youngest person who ever represented the United States in Olympic rifle matches.

Besides competing in the matches, he toured Paris, Rheims and World War battlefields. Now he is home again, describing his experiences and showing his medals to friends, who say, "Tell us about it."

Three medals and an Olympiad diploma are his trophies. These he won by placing first in the "re-entry" 22-caliber rifle match and placing second in the small-bore rifle championship match. In the latter contest he broke the world record by scoring 396 out of a possible 400. This stood as a new world mark until almost the end of the match, when Pierre de Lisle of France scored 398.

"United States marksmen won team and individual rifle championships of the world this year, but they may face stiffer opposition in the future," Dinwiddie admitted.

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OLYMPIAD DIPLOMA AWARDED TO DINWIDDIE FOR HIS WORLD RECORD WITH RIFLE, SCORING 396 OUT OF A POSSIBLE 400.

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"Silk goods cost only half as much there as in the United States. A fine silk shirt can be bought for \$3. Other clothes there are about 20 per cent cheaper than they are in this country."

In Rheims the youthful marksman visited one of France's largest and most famous wine cellars. There he saw 40 cases of champagne being prepared for shipment to the King of England.

The cellar has three levels, all underground, and its passageways, if placed end-to-end, would extend 11 miles. On the first level below the ground wine is stored immediately after bottling. A few weeks later it

is transferred to the second level. There it is kept for years. When it is to be shipped away it is lowered to the third level, where packing and shipping machinery is installed.

World War battlefields have lost their warlike appearance to a great extent, Dinwiddie found. In the Chateau-Thierry region houses have been built and crops are growing upon fields which once were gas swept and shell torn. In other sections barbed wire which was in front of trenches has been rolled up to be carted away.

A great tract in the Champagne battlefield area has been reserved by the French government as a drill ground, and this region still has its trenches and gun pits. Near Verdun ruins of forts were seen by the Washington boy.

pay much attention to him," Shriver recalled.

"But he kept on coming to practice until older boys on the team and I could not help noticing him. And when we gave him suggestions he followed them quickly."

Dinwiddie improved. Central High's match with the Boston Latin School, set for the Autumn of 1922, drew near. And Coach Shriver decided to give the stick-to-it-live recruit his first taste of interstate competition. At the appointed time the youngster took his place and fired the perfect score of 100!

That score placed Dinwiddie on Central High's varsity rifle team. The following spring he was elected to captain the team during the school year of 1923-24. To keep in practice during last summer the captain-elect took Coach Shriver's advice to join the District of Columbia National Guard and to use the outdoor range at Camp Simms, D. C. The guardsmen placed him on their team which went to the national matches at Camp Perry, Ohio, last summer and won second place in the National Guard class.

Returning to school last Fall, he led the Central High team to victories over every high school rifle team in the United States east of the Mississippi River. Throughout the year he devoted some time of almost every week day to rifle practice.

When Olympic preliminaries to determine the membership of the United States team were held in 30 different centers of the United States last spring, Dinwiddie entered. He was one of 35 selected to participate in the national finals held at Quantico, Va. At Quantico he won his place on the 1924 United States Olympic team.

And mighty applause marked the Central High school graduation when Principal Stephen E. Kramer stopped awarding diplomas and announced: "The next diploma to be presented has been earned by a student who is not here, but is in France with the United States Olympic team—Marcus Walthall Dinwiddie."

Marcus W. Dinwiddie's leap from novice to Olympic rifleman in two years has been explained in two ways. Dinwiddie says it is due to instruction he has received from the coach of his high school rifle team, Gunnery Sergt. O. M. Shriver, U. S. Marine Corps. But Coach Shriver tells a different story.

"Dinwiddie never had shot when he first tried out for the Central High team in the Autumn of 1922, and he was so small that we did not



MARCUS W. DINWIDDIE, YOUNGEST PERSON WHO EVER REPRESENTED UNITED STATES IN OLYMPIC RIFLE MATCHES. Photo by Clinch.



HE WALKED SEVEN MILES THROUGH THE NIGHT.